

SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC TERMS OF REFERENCE

REVIEW TOPIC

Scrutiny Review: Impact of Universal Credit

RATIONALE FOR REVIEW

The impact of Universal Credit in Ashfield was added to the Scrutiny Workplan 2019/20 by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

When discussing approving the impact of Universal Credit (UC) to the Workplan, Members stressed how recent welfare reforms, and more specifically the introduction of UC, has caused significant community concern in Ashfield. Committee Members, through this review, have a particular interest in assessing this concern and how the Council and its partners are offering support to impacted claimants.

PURPOSE OF REVIEW/OBJECTIVES

In reviewing the impact of Universal Credit, Members of the Committee were looking to explore and gain a greater understanding of the following:

- Welfare Reform
- How Ashfield District Council has planned for Welfare Reform
- The impact the introduction of Universal Credit has had on tenants and claimants, including the most vulnerable
- Mitigation steps the Council is taking
- Any impact the introduction of UC has had on Council finances

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

Initial indicators of success for this review will be:

- Committee Members gaining a greater understanding of:
 - Recent welfare reforms
 - ADC preparation, mitigation, and future planning for welfare reforms
 - Objectives and impact of Universal Credit (UC)
- Ensuring the partnerships supporting UC are effective

REVIEW METHODOLOGY

Methodology for this review will be:

- Gaining an understanding of welfare reforms, ADC preparation and mitigation
- Understanding the impact of UC thus far, future anticipated impact
- Interviewing key witnesses from the Council, DWP, Citizens Advice Bureau

KEY WITNESSES

Committee Members have indicated the following may have useful key witnesses:

- Housing
- Finance
- Revenues and Customer Services
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Citizens Advice Bureau

SPECIFIC EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION REQUIRED

Specific evidence and information required for this review includes:

- Information on welfare reforms, objectives of UC, introduction of UC in Ashfield
- Steps ADC has taken in preparation and response to welfare reforms, specifically UC
- Impact the introduction of UC has had on the Council
- Social impact of the introduction of UC